

**Testimony for SB 400, Refundable Earned Income Tax Credit. Sponsored By:
Senator Christine Kaufman**

Mr Chairman and members of the committee: For the record my name is Moe Wosepka, I currently serve as Executive Director of the Montana Catholic Conference. The Montana Catholic Conference is the public policy arm for the two Catholic Bishops in Montana. There are over 140,000 Catholics in the two Diocese statewide.

For the past 10 years I worked for Good Samaritan Ministries in Helena. Our ministry was to the poor and homeless, the forgotten in our nursing homes, and the ignored in our prisons and jails. It is from this perspective that I speak to you today.

In Catholic Social teaching we recognize a Preferential Option for the poor. We feel the basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

The EITC is a critical support program that provides a strong incentive to work and helps lift millions of families out of poverty. The EITC has been enhanced by a number of states through state-EITC programs that provide additional benefits to the federal program. This bill is an attempt to provide those additional benefits to the working poor in Montana.

The Montana Catholic Conference stands in support of SB 400. Thank you for your time.

Contact information: Moe Wosepka, Executive Director Montana Catholic Conference, 1301 11th Ave, Helena, Mt. Phone 442-5761.